

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)	
)	
of the Educator Certificate of)	ORDER OF SUSPENSION
)	
Earleane Putnam Williams,)	
)	
Certificate 174683)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on February 13, 2008. On April 10, 2007, the State Department of Education (Department) sent Earleane Putnam Williams a notice of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate. Upon receipt of the notice, Ms. Williams agreed to waive her right to a hearing and entered into a repayment plan. The Department then sent Ms. Williams a repayment agreement. Ms. Williams signed the agreement on May 26, 2007. The signed repayment agreement and an initial payment of \$100.00 were received by the Department on May 31, 2007. Ms. Williams made additional payments of \$100.00 on June 28, 2007; July 30, 2007; August 30, 2007; October 1, 2007; October 30, 2007; and November 28, 2007. Thereafter, Ms. Williams failed to comply with the terms of the repayment agreement. Ms. Williams has not repaid the remaining balance of \$450.00 which is now past due. After considering the information presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Williams's certificate until she repays the full amount owed on her outstanding loan with the State of South Carolina obtained through the Center for Teacher Education, Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA).

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Williams holds a valid South Carolina educator certificate and has over twelve years of teaching experience. On July 26, 2001, Ms. Williams signed a promissory note with the State of South Carolina to obtain a loan of

\$2300 to pay for the costs of applying for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). One of the terms of that promissory note was that the loan recipient would be obligated to repay one half of the loan amount, \$1150, if after participation in the process for one year, she did not continue or otherwise successfully complete the process of obtaining NBPTS certification. Under this term of the agreement, Ms. Williams is now obligated to repay the outstanding amount owed. CERRA and the Department have sent several letters to Ms. Williams informing her that the \$1150 was due and of the consequences for failing to repay the amount due. After receiving notice of the possible suspension of her educator certificate, Ms. Williams agreed to waive her right to a hearing and entered into a repayment agreement. Ms. Williams executed the repayment agreement on May 26, 2007. The signed repayment agreement and an initial payment of \$100.00 were received by the Department on May 31, 2007. Ms. Williams submitted subsequent payments of \$100.00 on June 28, 2007; July 30, 2007; August 30, 2007; October 1, 2007; October 30, 2007; and November 28, 2007. Thereafter, Ms. Williams failed to comply with the terms of the repayment agreement. Ms. Williams has not repaid the remaining balance of \$450.00 that is now past due.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board may suspend the certificate of any person for unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-25-150 and 160 (2004). The State Board finds that there is sufficient information to support its decision to suspend Ms. Williams's educator certificate from the date of this Order until she has satisfied her remaining financial obligation to the State of South Carolina, as established in the promissory note referenced above. Upon full payment of the balance due, if Ms. Williams wishes to have her certificate reinstated, she may make a written request for reinstatement to the Office of Educator Certification of the Department of Education.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By:


Al Simpson, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
February 13, 2008